

SHALL PHYSICIANS OR LAYMEN DIRECT AND CONDUCT HEALTH WORK AMONG SCHOOL CHILDREN?

Of all health movements there is none more definite, better organized or more certain of its program than are school administrators in their campaign to have teachers and not physicians and health boards control the practice of diagnosis, prevention and curative medicine among school children.

Government publications paid for out of Federal taxes are extensively utilized for extensive propaganda. We have called attention before to what is said in some of these publications, and there is now before us a recent number of "School Life," which contains interesting reading. One writer, and he is a physician, outlines the history of physical education and health work. Among other illuminating statements we find these:

"School health agencies now control the machineries of communicable-disease prevention and control. In other words, the school health service, including its staff of physicians, dentists, and nurses, is best prepared to handle most of the positive health and physical efficiency program of the school."

"In its attempt to assert itself and to convince itself and the public of its value, finding its traditional field fairly well covered by the school health movement and wishing more or less independence of the school health agency, physical education began to cast about for other objectives outside of those concerned with the body. It found them in a large measure in certain mental, moral, and social values, that physical education claims are the invariable products, particularly of games, sports, and athletics. As a result, in at least one state there is a state director of physical education and a state director of school health."

"Let us assume that both the school health service and physical education are fundamentally interested in the positive health and physical efficiency of school children. If this is true, there is no reason why separate administration should be maintained. Independent supervision leads to duplication, friction, misunderstanding, economic waste, and, worst of all, to poor results. Some phases of the work may be overemphasized, others slighted."

Other government publications emphasize the rapid gain that is being made in wresting the control of medical work in schools from boards of health and placing it where they claim it belongs—under control of boards of educators.

COUÉ

"The more stupid they are the easier they get my theory," said Emile Coué, in an interview with Mollie Merrick of the San Francisco Examiner, upon his first arrival in San Francisco. Continuing, he pictured the "dumb," the "unconscious," the "mentally nil" as enjoying the benefits of the Coué philosophy with greater facility than do other persons.

Quite a compliment (?) to his followers, but that is his business; and that's all for Coué so far as we are concerned.

WHY NOT TRAVEL BY WATER

to the annual meeting of the California Medical Association?

In this number we carry a full-page advertisement of the Los Angeles Steamship Company, offering rather remarkable inducements in rates and comforts to those members, particularly those from Central and Northern California, who will enjoy going to the Southland by steamer. The service and schedule of the steamers Yale and Harvard offer a very convenient and pleasant way to the meeting. There will be a sailing from San Francisco at 4 p. m. Saturday, May 10, putting passengers into Los Angeles at 11 a. m. Sunday the 11th. Return sailings will be Friday, May 16, and Sunday the 18th, at 3 p. m. from Los Angeles, arriving in San Francisco at 10 o'clock the following morning. There will be additional sailings southbound on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, and northbound on Tuesday and Wednesday. So you may enjoy a week-end vacation and rest both going and coming from the meeting.

Very low round-trip fares include berth and meals. Special entertainment features will be provided by the ships' orchestra in the ballroom.

"CONGENITAL DISEASES"

During the first eight months of 1923, according to the State Board of Health, 46.3 per cent of the deaths among infants was due to "congenital" diseases.

It would be interesting, but unprofitable in the present state of knowledge and statistics, to speculate upon the proportion of these deaths that parents are responsible for. It would likewise be worthwhile, if possible, to trace the causes back through more distant ancestry and distinguish these from the influences of antenatal diseases and injuries to the child.

Another point more important perhaps than any of these would be a determination of the morbidity among the 53.7 per cent of infants who did not succumb to "congenital diseases." Undoubtedly, morbidity and injuries among infants before birth constitute not only the basis of many health failures in after life, but are unavoidably included under other headings in mortality statistics.

"THE KINDERGARTEN AND HEALTH"

Under this title, the Bureau of Education, Department of the Interior, Washington, has issued another pamphlet containing information of interest to physicians.

The position is taken that the most important function of a kindergarten is to serve as a public health station connecting the infant welfare station on the one hand with the health service under control of the public schools on the other.

Copies of this pamphlet may be secured from the government printing office in Washington.